



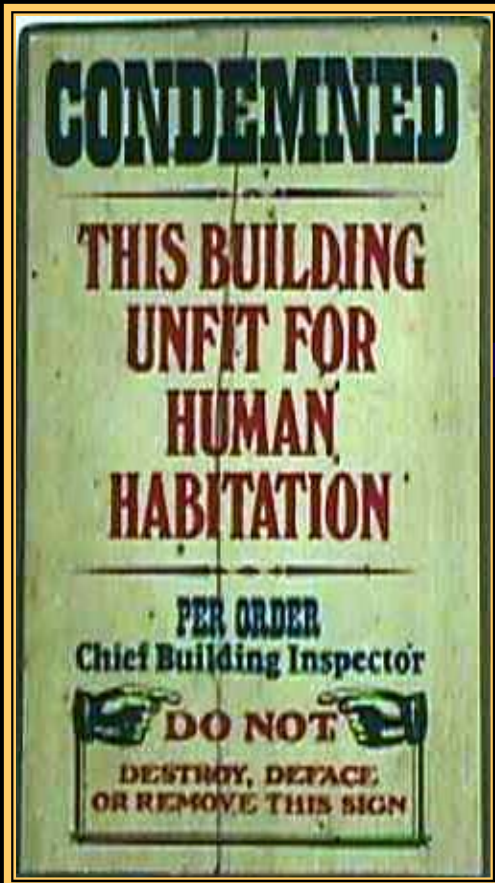
A BRIEF HISTORY

- ❖ In order to understand Public Health in Massachusetts, it is important to understand the unique characteristics of our State.
- ❖ The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is a Home Rule State. This means that each community, be it a town of 400 citizens or a city of 200,00, regulates itself.
- ❖ Home Rule limits the development of County wide structured government and therefore limits trained professional staff (inclusive of health directors and agents, public health nurses, emergency medical personnel, and hospital staff).

Select Highlights in the History of Public Health in Massachusetts



- ❖ 1869 – Thomas Plunkett of Pittsfield, at the urging of his wife, introduced a bill to establish a State Board of Health.
- ❖ After years of noted discrepancies between rural and urban death rates caused by communicable disease, it was formally recognized that deaths due to disease could be prevented through proper sanitation at both the public and private level.
- ❖ Individual cities and towns would later follow through with sanitary regulations and the implementation of Boards of Health.



❖ May 22, 1869, Massachusetts establishes the first State Board of Health and Vital Statistics in the nation, asserting that *“all governments since the time of Moses are established to protect the life and health of their people.”*

❖ The enabling legislation states *“with such powers as will enable them thoroughly to investigate matters relating to public health, and with a view to advise concerning it.”* Governor Cloflin signs it into law on June 21 of the same year.

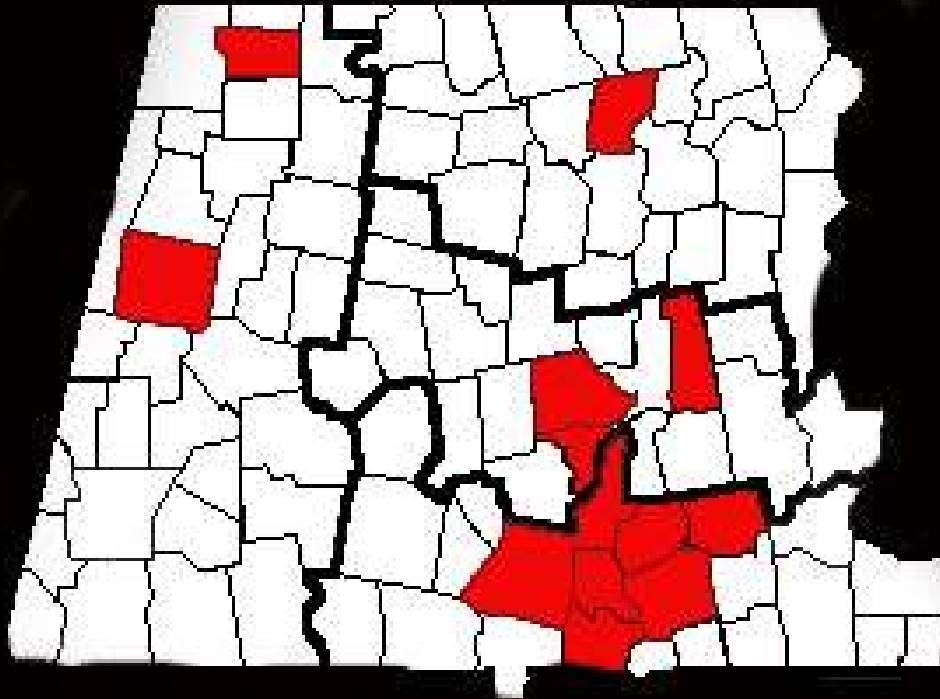
WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS; UNIQUE IN MANY ASPECTS...



- ❖ Home to the 3rd largest city in the state.
- ❖ Also home to many small towns with populations of less than 500 citizens.
- ❖ Our geographical topography sets us apart from the rest of the state. We are divided by the Connecticut & Housatonic Rivers as well the Taconic Range which is bisected by the Appalachian Trail.

Western Massachusetts As a Health District

WESTERN MASS.



Population
Centers

Evolution of public health trainings



- 2002 The first day long training introducing Public Health Staff to:
- EMS,
- MEMA,
- MAZMAT,
- DEP,
- WMCOSH,
- TNEC at UMASS Lowell,
- DPH.

2003 Expanding of Training

- Expanded the focus of training with Western Massachusetts Coalition for Occupational Safety and Health.
- DOT manual,
- Introduction to level A , B & C equipment.
- Introduction to chemical & biological hazards.
- Introduction to decontamination equipment.

2003 Fall MHOA Conference



- The word got out in the eastern part of the state and a short version was presented at the annual Mass. Health Officers meeting, in eastern Mass.

2004 WMCOSH & MDPH



- Program has now come to be recognized as a certification course for: emergency responders, 24 hour basic health and safety course.
- OSHA certified under 29 CFR 1910.120